

THE CHRISTIANS  
*Triumph over Death.*

A *J. Mather*  
S E R M O N  
AT THE  
F U N E R A L

OF  
RICHARD LEGH: of Lime  
IN THE  
County Palatine of CHESTER Esq;  
A T  
W I N W I C K  
IN THE

County Palatine of LANCASTER Sept. 6. 1687.

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By W. Shippen D.D. Rector of Stockport in Cheshire, Some-  
times Fellow of Univers. Coll. Oxon.

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Triumph over Death.

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AT THE

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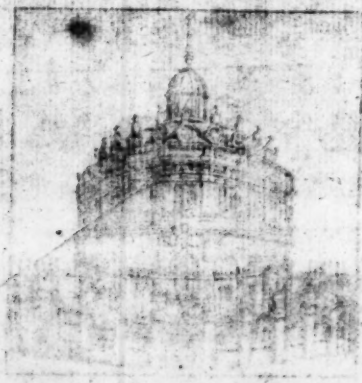
Sept. 12. 1888.

IN THE  
County Palace of Chester Etd;

W I N W I C K

IN THE  
County Palace of Lancaster Sept. 6. 1887.

By W. Stephen D.D. Rector of Stockport in Cheshire, some-  
times Fellow of Trinity Coll. Oxon.



OXFORD: Printed by the University Press, 1888.

To the much Honoured and most Accomplished Mrs. *Elizabeth Legh*, the Vertuous Relict of *Richard Legh* of *Lanc* Esq.

MADAM,

**H**AD my abilities to perform, been equal to my propension to undertake your commands, these Papers had presented you with something more worthy the memory of that half of your self which is in Heaven, and less unfit for the perusal of the other with which we are still honoured upon Earth. But the greatest ambition, as well as the most proper disposal of them as they are, was to have been buried in the same dark Vault with their subject. Yet seeing you would not be prevailed with to lay aside your authority over me, nor be denied a sight of that, which your circumstances would not permit you to hear. I committed this Discourse into your hands, in confidence you would have confined it to your Closet; where I could

have rested secure of a pardon for all its failures, upon your own native goodness; but could never have admitted the least thought of suffering it to be more publick, had it not been for your irresistible commands, and invincible resolutions to have it so, notwithstanding the greatest and justest importunities of my self and friends to the contrary; so that your Ladyship must be accountable to the world for the many imperfections it labours under.

The Pictures of our absent friends though they express no more then their outward and visible features are very desiræable and delightful monuments; but the Character of their minds, and their inward and invisible beauties are far more excellent and valuable.

Fine spirits like elegant faces are difficult to be drawn to an exactness, even by the greatest Masters. And this worthy person hath been equally unhappy both under the Pencil and the Pen. How little I have succeeded, and how short this rude draught falls of the Original: your first reading (I doubt) will testify with trouble if not with tears: and now when 'tis too late, force you to take up my first wish that this Province had been allotted



allotted to a more skilful hand, that might have done him more right, and given you more satisfaction. Better parts might not only have set a greater lustre on so noble a Theme, but have reflected an honour upon themselves, and together with his consecrated their own names to Eternity; while my humble Talent only sues for an excuse, and may not unreasonably expect it too; if either extremity of Passion through this surprizing blow; or distraction of thought, from a like intervenient Occasion and Office I was called to at the same time, which throws the mind into confusion, and darkness, may pass for indispositions to such composures. But what ever Entertainment this discourse may meet with from its deficiencies of form, and poverty of art, in this nice and censorious age, yet the richness of the matter, and the excellence of the argument are sufficient (I know) to recommend it to a place among your choicest Cimelia.

But as the greatness of his worth, enhances the estimate of your loss; so the displaying of that, doth but open and revive your sense of this: which I finding it more

reasonable to appease then aggravate, and observing how much you resemble the famous Lady Paulina in S. Jerom not only in the eminence of her Vertues, but in the tenderness of her passions; shall rather recommend to you those few familier considerations in the close hereof directed to the stopping of the stream of nature; or allaying the bitterness of your grief, if not the turning it into the sweeter passion of Joy. To the making all which advices of reason, and succours of faith there offered, effectual to that purpose, 'tis requisite that you bring along with you, a serious attention, and a greatness of Spirit: The former of which you have in your power, the latter in your nature. For the awakening of which, I know nothing more prevalent then to mind you of the original Stock, from whence you Sprung; and of those personal qualifications, and that elevated Genius, wherewith you are blessed. Your paternal family hath furnished out persons of that eminence both for parts and virtues, as have adorned the highest stations in Church and State. A deliberate reflection whereupon will hardly suffer  
you

you to stoop to so weak a passion, or entertain  
so mean a thought, as must sink you below  
the dignity of your Line, or to be dejected  
with any thing, save what is degenerate, or  
inglorious. Your own excellent endowments  
which have sufficiently appeared on other  
occasions; as the serenity of your understand-  
ing, the soundness of your Judgment and  
constancy of mind, if duly touched and ex-  
cited with these meditations can hardly fail  
of raising the desired effects. But though  
envy it self cannot but give place to a re-  
verence for the dead; yet it will not so pa-  
tiently brook the commendations of the living.  
And though his modesty who is gone cannot  
be wounded by his Just Character, yet yours  
is so tender, that it would be oppressed with  
your own. So that I know not how to do  
right to the rest of your Vertues, without  
offering an injury to this. I shall therefore  
indeavour to supply the omission of your de-  
served praises, and the weakness of my other  
performances, with the sincerity and ferven-  
cy of my prayers, to him who can wipe all  
tears from your Eyes, and make the  
bones that he hath broken to rejoyce,  
for

for your support and improvement under this  
severe Visitation; that what you have lost  
in temporal comforts, may be abundantly re-  
payed you in Spiritual, in this life; and with  
eternal glory in the next: which shall be the  
constant Intercession of

Most Honoured Madam

Osob. 3.  
1687.

Your most Obedient

Faithful, Humble servant

W. S.

the Infatuation of the Text. So that might it not  
have been better said, O Grave! where is thy Victory?

But notwithstanding all this, the Text looks up-  
on the words with some of the words.

*O Death! where is thy Sting? O Grave!*  
Solemnity: and by Fate, as through a Victory,  
discover a Victory beyond the Victory, and a Victory beyond.

**T**HESE words at the first view, may seem  
but an improper subject for this sad and  
solemn occasion. For what greater solec-  
cism can well be imagined, than a Text of rejoicing  
for a Funeral Sermon? than the celebrating a  
Day of mourning and lamentation with a song of  
Triumph? and the drawing the bright scene of  
Mirth, and Jubilee, before the clouded minds of the  
disconsolate and afflicted? What an incongruity  
to ask, where are the weapons of Death, and  
where's the Victory of the Grave, when every place  
and object, proclaims their puissance and at-  
chievements? Every Church yard and Charnel-house  
being stuffd with their spoils; and the whole earth  
but one *Markpelah*, where they bestow their pri-  
soners, and bury their slain. The cries of the  
Mourners that go about the streets, and the tears  
of them that weep within doors, do sufficiently  
confess the wounds, and acknowledge the conquests  
of these powerful enemies. And the sad spectacle  
before us, being already the Triumph of the one,  
and suddenly to become the Captive of the other;  
seems at once to answer the Question, and defeat



the Insultation of the Text. So that might it not have been better said, *O Death! where is not thy Sting? O Grave! where is not thy Victory?*

But notwithstanding all this, he that looks upon the words with senses duely exercised, may discern a great propriety in them for the present Solemnity: and by Faith, as through a *Telescope*, discover a Rich and pleasant Country beyond the Gloomy region of the Grave, and a fresh Blooming Life springing out of the Dust of Death. Which though it bears the name of an Enemy, yet to a good Christian performs the Office of a Friend, in letting him out of this vain and wretched State of Mortality into a life of unmixed, and unchangeable Glory. This contemplation hath force enough not only to Justify the suitableness of the Text, but to reform our common Sentiments and practices upon such occasions, by making us exchange our Cypress for Laurel, and our tears of Sorrow for those of Joy, which will farther appear upon a due examination of these words.

This Text I have taken at the second hand; it being not Originally the Apostles (as himself confesses in the verse preceding) but a Quotation of his out of the Prophet *Hosea*, c. 13. v. 14. which place though our Translation reading thus, *O Death! I will be thy Plagues; O Grave! I will be thy Destruction*; gives but a faint resemblance to it. Yet the Septuagint comes nearer to it, especially if we allow the Words *Sting* and *Victory* to have been transposed through the transcribers negligence; which is favoured by considerable Copies and

and Versions retaining the Prophets order of the words in this passage of the Apostle, For then they would be found to differ only in one word, and not at all in sense, it being to the same effect whether we say *O Grave! where is thy Victory?* or, *where is thy Cause?* wherein thou hast so long prevailed. Or, *where is thy Plea* which thou used to put in at the Bar of Divine Justice? as for the word which we here render [I will be] it also signifies the same with that which is commonly translated [Where] in the Judgment of several Eminent Christian Interpreters, and of some learned Jews, as well as of the Septuagint, which here, and generally where not corrupted, is our best Guide to the true sense of the Original, and for that reason alone, doubtless, was so often followed by the Inspired Pen-men of the New Testament, even when it seemingly departs from the present reading of the Hebrew Code, (so that their conjecture is as needless, as 'tis groundless, who conceive the latter Hebrew word was read by the LXX in this place, instead of the former.) But the Hebrew it self hath the greatest affinity of all with the Text, according to some; and those most & eminently learned in the Oriental Tongues; by whose assistance they have undertaken to reconcile and adjust all the rest of the words, both as to their Signification and Order of place; and so completed the agreement betwixt the Prophet and the Apostle. But however that be, 'tis sufficient for our purpose, that the sense of the two clauses in this sentence,

<sup>b</sup> Vulg.  
<sup>c</sup> Ethiop.

<sup>c</sup> אֶהְיֶה

<sup>d</sup> אֵיךְ

<sup>e</sup> Jan. and  
Tremel. &c.

<sup>f</sup> Capell.  
Critic. Sacr.

<sup>g</sup> Dr. Pocock on this  
place.

is not much different; and the scope of the whole, even in our version, is exactly the same. *O Death where are thy fatal Plagues? or poisonous Sting; O Grave where is thy destruction of, of Victory gained over them.*

h. Gualt.  
in loc.

i. Απολυ-  
ται ἡ φρε-  
νὴ μὴδ'  
ἡ χρὴ μὴδ-  
χρὴς ἡ σαρ-  
κα ὡς ποτε  
ὡς ποτε. in  
loc.

Which Words though in the Prophet they might literally denote Gods deliverance of his people from the greatest temporal Dangers and Enemies even Death and the Grave, and which by some are applyed to Gods destruction of *Sennacheribs* Army; yet by the Apostle they are raised to an higher sense, and adapted to the general Resurre-  
ction: when *Death* and the *Grave* shall be swal-  
lowed up in *Victory*; i. e. for ever, when they shall be quite Abolished, and Vanish; not only so, as to be no more, but so as no Footsteps shall remain of their having ever been; when there shall not be seen so much as the least Marks, or Scars up-  
on those who have layn under their utmost Force and Cruelty; not a Blemish on their Bodies; nor a Hair of their heads Singed.

And as this Scripture will then have its Con-  
summation, so it certainly had its Beginning at Christs Resurrection; when the groundwork was laid of this our Rejoycing. Whereupon these words are conceived by some to have been a pro-  
phet *Επιφωνιον* for the Captain of our Salvation, when having foiled his Enemies, wrested their Weapons out of their hands, given them their Deaths-  
wound, and seeing them ly grovelling upon the ground, he might draw near, and Insult them say-  
ing: *where's now thy Sting, O! Death? wherewith thou*

thou hast so often wounded and poisoned mankind? *Where's now thy Victory, O Grave!* which thou hast so long carried, and boasted of, over the Children of men. And the Apostle here under the certain hope, and sweet contemplation of that glorious day of Universal Triumph cannot forbear to anticipate that joy of the Resurrection: but looking upon these baffled enemies, a stingless Death, and a powerless Grave, as hurtless and despicable things; breaks out into this Triumphant song; this holy Exaltation and Insultation of the Text. *O Death! &c.*

These words imply a Complete Victory, and express a Joyful Triumph. The better to represent the reasonableness of which Triumph, and to lay bare the Foundations of this Rejoycing, we must enquire what Victory this is, and by whom obtained: but before we can learn its just value and greatness, we must be acquainted with the nature and quality of the Adversary: so that we have three parts or steps cut out for the progress of our Discourse,

1. The Nature and Dreadfulness of the Enemies.
2. The Author and Absoluteness of the Victory over them.
3. The Reasonableness of Triumphing, and Rejoycing for the same.

In speaking to the first part, we shall shew

1. Who and what kind of Enemies these are.

2. With what Weapon they assail us. 3. What Success they have formerly had.

I. The Enemies are Death, and the Grave. That by the former is here meant the death of the Body, is manifest from the whole bent and scope of this Chapter; which is to demonstrate the Resurrection of the dead; both of Christ the first fruits, and of all Christians as the entire harvest, through him at his coming. And it is thence also no less evident, that by Grave (though the Original Word both in the Prophet and the Apostle, by its various and doubtful senses, hath afforded a large field to the Criticks to shew their Reading and Judgement in) is here to be understood, neither the Prison of the damned, nor the state of the dead, but the Mansion of our Carcasses till the Resurrection: And though Death and the Grave are here distinguished by the Apostle, yet in effect being the same to us, we shall in the sequel of this discourse, for the most part, speak of them as but One.

This is the enemy then we have to deal with, and how *Dreadful* it is to the Children of Corruption needs no other proof, than a bare appeal to the Universal sense and suffrage of mankind; which *Job* hath roundly summ'd up in his description of Death by *the King of terrors*: and after him *Aristotle* much to the same purpose, in styling it *Φοβεῶν φοβεράτων*. There's nothing in the World can beget a greater dread, or create a more exquisite horror in the minds of men, than the black and Melancholly apprehension of descending into  
the



the dismal state of everlasting darkness and solitude; oblivion and senseless. There's nothing we are not willing to do, to suffer, or to part with, rather than be brought under its power. We are ready to undergo all labours and pains, fasting and Physick, shame and tortures, nay (I had almost said) death it self to avoid it. So much of truth is there in That of the Father of lies; *Skin for Skin, and all that a man hath, will he give* Job. 2. 4. *for his Life.* And this is so well grounded a passion, that it seizes and shakes the mind, and shrivels up the Spirits of the stoutest, the wisest, and most virtuous men. Our natures are agast, and recoil at the very thoughts of death, and our countenances wax wan at the sight of the Grave. We are ~~to~~ unfit to enter the lists with these Combatants, that we are scarce able to support our selves under the bare prospect or mention of them. These *Basilisks* dis-spirit us at their approach, and kill us with their very looks. The sound of their names (like that of *Hunniades* to the *Turks*) strikes a dread into our Soul, and shoots a chilness through our Veins: which *Lewis* the 11th was so apprehensive of, that he would not endure the mention of them, either in health or sickness; but charged his Servants when ever they should see him weak and languishing, to exhort him to confess his Sins, but in no wise to name death to him, least that alone should kill him before the time. The reason of all which must be sought for, in our Inbred Antipathy to Annihilation. The fear of Death lies as close to our essence as the Love  
of

of Life, and to offer to reconcile a man to the thoughts of his dissolution, is as contradictory an attempt, as to persuade him to fall out with his nature, and renounce his being: And if it be a Natural, it must also be a Necessary, and unavoidable passion: and consequently 'tis as impossible to throw off the Fear, as the Fate of dying.

This Enemy is not only Formidable, and operative meerly upon the fancy, but its really Hurtful and *Mischievous*. Death smites us in all our Capacities, in our Relations, and our Persons. It turns us out of our Stateliest Houses and Palaces; and Sequesters us from our greatest possessions and Empires. It blasts our fairest Hopes, and dashes in pieces our finest Models: *Breaking our purposes, and the thoughts of our heart*. It snatches our tender Children out of our Arms, and tears away the dearest Guest of our bosom from us. It plunders us of our beauty and our strength, of our honours and our pleasures. It not only deprives us of our liberty and the light, by shutting us up in a close dark prison; but it layeth us in a bed of dishonour and loathsomeness among worms and serpents. It throws us into a Pit of stench and rottenness; where it preys upon our bodies, putrefies our flesh, and consumes our bones. It not only lops off some of our choicest comforts; but lays the Ax to the root of all our Enjoyments; in making a divorce berwixt the dearest Couple in nature, our Body and Soul; and drawing after it (if not timely prevented) an utter destruction of both eternally.

Add hereunto, that this is an inveterate and *implacable* Enemy: with whom there can no league be struck, no amity purchased, no reconciliation had. It gives quarter to none; but shews the like mercy of the Sword to all. Indeed beaten, captivated, destroy'd it may be, ( so it hath been by Christ ) but appeased, reconciled, never. The Devil who is General and Parent of this Enemy, being the Father of Sin, ( who is the Mother of Death ) hath like an infernal *Hannibal* sworn all his Offspring to have no peace with the Posterity of *Adam*. Nevertheless Death could do us no great mischief, if he came not armed with his Sting, which is

The second particular: the weapon with which this Enemy assaults us. The meaning and reason of which Title is next to be examined. The Apostle declares the former briefly and plainly in the next words. *The sting of death is sin*. A dangerous and deadly weapon. The congruity of their names might be deduced from their common relation to a Serpent; whose natural weapon is a ~~sting~~ *sting*, as Sin is the proper hurtful Instrument of that old Serpent, the Devil. But the dreadfulnes of this Weapon, and its analogy to a Sting, will more fully appear from a distinct consideration of the Pungent and Poisonous nature of Sin.

I. Sin is of a Pungent and Painful nature; It usually approaches us indeed with a courtly address, and a fawning salutation: like *Solomons* strange Woman; *her lips drop as an honycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil: but the end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two edged sword*. A prosperous and har-

den'd Sinner, (who resolves to go on *in the way of his heart, and in the sight of his eyes*) knowing what smart and anguish the reflection upon his guilt, and the very thoughts of the Divine Vengeance will necessarily give him, industriously beats out of his mind all notices and remembrances of these things; and bears down the first essays of Conscience, either to inform or restrain him. The *Voluptuary* endeavours to drown its voice with the louder noise of his Tabret and Harp. The *Mammonist* tries to hide, if not smother, this Vice-God, as *Rachel* did her false ones, among his Worldly Stuff and Furniture. The *Atheist* and *Hypocrite* strive to over-rule its Plea, with Erroneous Principles, and Specious Pretences. But at last, when the Conscience hath thrown off her chains and servitude, and asserted her rightful authority and dominion over the Sinner (be it in old age or sickness, when he is smitten of God or Man) she will change the whole scene of affairs; she will set up a true light in his soul, and give him a juster apprehension of things, and another sense of his own condition; she will pull off the vails and hypocrisies of sin, and bring her forth in her own horrid shape and native deformity; she will tear away the dress, and wash off the Paint, wherewith Satan hath set off this *Jezebel*; she will present the Sinner with the right end of the Perspective, which will give him the true image, the full size, and the dire prospect of Divine Wrath and Everlasting Burnings; which will then prove so far from being a *Painted* or *Poetick* Fire, that the meer speculation of them, *i.e.* the very intelligible species pass through

through a clear understanding, will like beams through a Burning Glass, immediately kindle a resembling raging flame in his Breast. One way or other Sin will manifest it self to be a Sting indeed, either in the sharpness of remorse to the Penitent, according to the hainousness of his guilt, or in the prickings and lancings of despair to the Obdurate Sinner. What pangs and throws, what anguish and torment it breeds even in good Men, may be learned from *David's mourning all the day long, and having no rest in his bones, by reason of his sin*; from *St. Pauls* vehement exclamation, *O wretched man that I am*; and from *St. Peters* bitter tears. And if it be so with the green tree, what will it be with the dry? If the true Penitent suffer such whips, what wonder if the Despairing Sinner be lashed with Scorpions?

————— *Nam mens sibi conscia facti  
Præmetuens adhibet stimulos, terretque flagellis.*

*Lucr.*

The most exquisite torments will be his perpetual entertainment; stings and poisons, fires and furies feed daily on his Marrow and drink up his Spirits, who is both the Malefactor, and his own Executioner; first, forging and sharpening the Knives and Goads, and all instruments of pain and cruelty in the dark and sinful recess of his mind; and afterward in a cool and sober reflection, desperately sticking them into his own Soul. It is in vain for such a person to expect relief from outward applications, who hath the Wolf within his Breast, the Gangrene in his Conscience. Bloody Nero may



remove from one appartment to another; may change his Bed every night, and his Companions every day; but the *Fiend* still haunts him, his murder'd Mothers Ghost follows him through all the crouds of Men and labyrinths of Bufiness; through Solitudes and Entertainments; through the Court and the Camp; the Clofet and the Theater; making his Face as ghastly as the Spectre that occasioned it; and filling his mind with the distractions and black horrors of that place from whence it came; and though he consulted his chiefeft Magicians in the case, yet he could find no Charm able to lay the Phantasm, or free him from its importunity. *Cain* may wander from one Climat to another, seeking rest, but findeth none; for so long as he carries Blood-guiltiness in his soul, he has not so much a *Cerberus* dogging him at his heels, as a *Fury* lodg'd within his bowels; and whilst that fatal sting, his guilt, remains, he must needs bleed within, languish and sink under Insupportable horror and *fearful looking for of Judgment*. Nay let a *Judas* or a *Spira* not only change Countries, but Worlds; when their souls through extremity of despair *choose strangling* (in *Jobs* phrase) seeking to Death for a Lenitive, and running to Hell for sanctuary; (as if the Rolling in Infernal Flames, would be a refreshment to them, in comparison of that more intolerable *Tophet* within; and the Devils themselves prove less cruel than their own Consciences) yet in the issue they will find themselves most dreadfully mistaken, for the Conscience is not to be put off with the Body, but the immortal worm will for ever stick to the immortal

tal part; and will not cease to gnaw within, when the Fiend lays on without. Those external sulphurous heats and scorplings will be so far from calling out, or allaying the internal, that they will reverberate and enrage them more, and heat the Furnace seven times hotter.

Besides, our blessed Lord who only lay under the Imputation of sin, felt greater sharps, and acuter pains in it, than in those Nails and Thorns and Spear, which pierced not only his Hands and Head, but his Heart; for this Sting went deeper than the Body, and made its way through that into his very Soul; throwing him into such vast Extremities, such strange and horrible Convulsions, as exceeded all things, but the infinit demerit of our Sins which occasioned them. What oppressions of Spirit? What heaviness of soul unto death? What dreadful Agonies? What bloody sweat did it cast him into? What vehement and reiterated Prayers? What doleful Cries under the *Paroxysms* of the Conflict, did it extort from him? And if Imputative guilt was thus terrible and tormenting to the holy Jesus, what will Inherent be to the wicked Reprobates, when they come to labour and struggle under it.

Mat. 26.  
39, 42, 44.

2. Sin is of that virulent nature, that like an Invenom'd *Indian* dart, it not only Wounds, but Poisons: which appears from two particulars; its quick spreading Contagion, and its fatal Influence.

1. It is of that subtle and quick Efficacy, that it immediately diffuses its contagion through the whole Man; through all the members of the Body,  
the

the faculties of the soul, and the spirit of the mind. It mounts up into the Brain, and fills that with unsound notions; it corrupts all the senses, making them the Panders of Vice and Vanity, inflaming the Eyes with Lust and Anger; and stopping the Ears like the Deaf Adder against the most charming and wholefom Instructions. *It sharpens the tongue like a Serpent, and lays the poison of Asps under the lips;* so that nothing but *Corrupt Communication* proceeds thence. It breaks out in the hands, in all grots acts of Violence and Injustice. *Yea, from the sole of the foot, even unto the head, it leaves no soundness, nothing but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores.* It sinks into the inward man also; darting its venom through all the secret channels and paths of life; seizing the noblest appartments of the soul, and the chief offices of reason. It transforms all its faculties into the powers of Satan; darkening the understanding, that it cannot discern, or determine aright of truth; disabling the will for embracing and holding fast what is good; and infeebling the memory that it can neither retain, nor return the notions that are stamp't upon it. It converts the affections and inclinations of the Mind, into Carnal Lusts and Appetites; and infects the fountain of them, the Heart; so as to make it swell and rankle with all manner of malice and wickedness. In short, it turns the whole Body into a body of Sin; changes that Incarnate Angel, the Soul, into a Fiend; and taints our very Spirit, that Divine Breath of Life, making it stink in the nostrils of the Almighty. Nay Sin is such an exalted Elixir

*lixir* of Poison, that the least grain of it is able to transmute a whole World in a moment into its Malignant nature. Which unhappy Projection hath been actually made already by our first Parents, who no sooner toucht it, but its Rancorous Ferment impregnated the whole Mass of Humane Nature, stream'd through all the Blood of their Posterity, and so turn'd the happy Golden Age into this wretched one of Brass and Iron.

3. Sin is of a deadly Influence ; it may make its entry as *Ebud* did to *Eglon*, with a Present in its hand, but will at last leave a secret Dagger in our Bowels. In a day or less it brings forth death ; *In the day thou eats thereof, thou shalt surely die*, *Judg. 3. 17, 21. Gen. 2.*

17. For though Man did not then presently die, yet in the same instant he became Mortal ; that deadly infusion was then let into his Veins, and mixt with his Spirits, which was sure to be his Bane in the conclusion. Whereas, without this, nothing in the World could have been destructive to us ; neither Weapon nor Distemper, Bliting nor Thunder ; 'tis Sin alone that gives an edge to the Sword, an infection to the Air, and points to the flames of Fire ; 'tis this that gives malignity to Feavers, virulence to Poisons, and arms every Creature with instruments of death against us ; so that had we not been so wretched, as to be Sinners, we had been so happy, as to be Immortal. Our naked Innocence would have been greater security to us, and more impenetrable than a Coat of Mail. Had it not been for this Sting, Death it self could never have reach'd us ; no, nor so much as had any being  
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in the World. *For Sin brings forth Death*, James i. 15. And though our Saviour (who knew no Sin) tasted of it, yet that was not of necessity, but a voluntary undertaking; that as the first *Adam* by Sin brought Death into the World, so he the second by Death might cast Sin out of it. This is the bitter Root from whence springs all the Misery, both for degree and kind, which ever befell Humane Nature. All the steps and advances towards our greatest sorrow, (from the first indisposition and slightest pain, to final Death and utter Damnation) derive from hence. We were once so hardy and firm in our uprightness, that nothing could pierce or annoy us; but that unhappy fall that Sin gave us, so bruised and loosened our Constitution, and made us ever since so feeble and tender, that we are now brought under the power of the weakest and most Contemptible Creature. The least Fly wants not a weapon to wound us; and the smallest Kernel hath been the fatal Instrument of Death. The Lamp of our Life is now easily blown out, we being ready to expire with any extraordinary Passions, even those soft and gayer ones of Mirth and Joy. 'Tis this that often makes the ordinary means of our health the occasion of our sickness; and not only fasting, but food, mortal. To this the several kinds of Death, whether Temporal, Spiritual or Eternal, owe their Original. The wounds which this Weapon gives, are so fatal, as to destroy not only Nature, but Grace also, and Glory; working such a Miracle of Mischiefe, as to extinguish that Life which is everlasting. It is so dreadful and ruinous, that  
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it kills the Soul as well as the Body, and sends not only to the Grave but to Hell. It destroy'd the old World of Men by a Flood, laying waste the Primitive *Paradisaal* Earth, and turning it into a great ruine. It swept away at once a great part of the Inhabitants of Heaven, arresting the fallen Angels before the Throne of the Almighty, and hurrying them headlong into the bottomless Pit; and it will at last people the woful Kingdom of Darknes with an unknown number of miserable deluded Wretches. There is no sort of it, whether Original (if its poison be not washed out in the Laver of Regeneration) or Actual, how small soever (if the Viper be not crushed by Contrition and Repentance) but will prove mortal. One single act of it (if it were possible to stop there) nay the least omission entitles to eternal Death. That is the wages that will be sure to be paid us, even for not doing our work. A petty neglect of Charity will deprive us of the inexhaustible Treasures of the Divine Mercy, and we may purchase to our selves a portion in the *lake which burns with fire*, by denying a Cup of cold Water. Not only an idle word; but sometimes silence it self consigns to Damnation. Thus deadly is this Sting, in all its kinds and degrees; which is the Weapon wherewith this Enemy assaules us.

3. The success which this Enemy usually meets with in his Conflict with Mankind, is Victory. If this were not sufficiently implied in the Question, *Where's thy Victory?* (As if he should say; thy Victory hitherto hath been notoriously both known and felt, but where is it now?) yet all Countries

and Ages, Histories and Observation shew how he hath gone on Conquering and to Conquer; what spoils and devastations he hath made throughout the World; what slaughters and massacres he hath committed upon the sons of Men. There was never any universal Monarch upon Earth besides this King of Terrors, to whom all living Creatures, sooner or later, must bow and obey. The mightiest Princes as well as the meanest Subjects, are his Tributaries; he neither favours the Scepter, nor forgets the Spade; but calls for them all in, and piles them up in one confused heap, to raise a triumphal Pyramid to his name. *Cyrus* and *Alexander*, *Cæsar* and *Tamberlane*, after all their glorious Conquests and Trophies, their Temples and Statues, have at last let fall their Victorious Arms at the feet of this great Conqueror, and laid down their Heads on the cold Clod, in homage and obeisance to his unbounded Empire. Those Heroick flaming Spirits who were so fierce and keen for Victory and Honour, and so unsatiable with All this World could give them, that they were impatient even to the Effeminacy of tears, that there was no more then this to Conquer and Triumph over, have yet in fine had all their heat and vigour quenched and tamed by the cold hand of Death; their Glory covered with Darkness; and themselves led in triumph, by this great Triumpher; who might insult them too in the Prophetick Stile, saying, *Is this the Man that made the Earth to tremble, and shaked Kingdoms? That made the World a Wilderness, and destroyed the Cities thereof? How art thou fallen from Heaven? O Lucifer*

*fer Son of the morning ; O thou who didst weaken the Nations, Art thou also become weak like other Men ?* Ezek. 32.  
*Dost thou lie among those that are slain with the Sword ?*  
*And bear the shame of them that go down to the Pit ?*  
 How come thy once glittering weapons of War to lie so quiet and rusty by thee, while those Delpicable Enemies the Worms assault and prevail over thee ; intrench within thy bosom, and prey upon thy Vitals ? He was as great a Warriour as a King who acknowledged the Absolute Sovereignty and general success of this Monarch, in asking the question ; *What Man is he that lives and shall not see death ? and shall he deliver his Soul from the hand of the Grave ? Psal. 89. 48.* And not only David, the Man after Gods own heart, but the Son of David, the Man to whose heart God himself was hypostatically joyn'd, the Blessed *Jesus*, was for some time his Subject and Captive. Who then can expect an Exemption from walking in this *way of all the Earth ?*

And yet we should the less envy him the glory and universality of this Victory, if the effects of it fell not so ruinously upon us. If the overthrow were no more than the greatest Temporal Destruction, nay, (which is greater) than an Eternal Annihilation ; (so that as our hopes were only in this life, our fears might be of no other) Our Case were the less Deplorable ; We should then, at worst, be but Negatively Miserable. But when the death of the Body, is but a Prologue to the death of the Soul ; and when this second Death is so far from being nothing, that it is an everlasting and unconceivable torment ; when it is such a forlorn state, as that the

greatest Evil, the utmost Misfortune of this VWorld, even Death it self, would be the greatest Good, and only Comfort; and yet not only the hopes, but the very Possibility of Dying, is there extinct; seeing it is an Immortal Death: This advances our Misery, not more above the Patience, than the Imagination of Mankind.

These Considerations, of the Dreadfulness of the Enemy, of the Deadliness of the VVeapon, of the generality of their Success, and the necessary Consequent thereof, our extream Desolation may give us just occasion to cry out; *O wretched Men that we are, who shall deliver us from the body of Sin and of this Death? VWho shall rescue us from the All-devouring Mouth of this Grave? Certainly neither Man nor Angel can deliver us from the force and fury of these Enemies; yet from the fear of them we may be delivered by the happy tidings of a perfect Victory over them all, which is brought us by,*

2. The second General. The Author and Absoluteness of this Victory. *Sed quis nobis Hercules;* But alas! who will venture to go forth and fight this Goliath for us, that thus Dismaies and Defies the whole Host of Mankind, and dares them to match him with an Equal Combatant. Let no Mans heart fail, for there is one who will undertake him, and he; though not a *David*, yet his Son according to the Flesh; one who hath already gone out, smitten, and set his foot upon him. 'Tis *Our great Champion, Christ Jesus*, who came down from Heaven on purpose to fight this bloody Battle for us; to enter

Rom. 7.  
24.

Heb. 2. 10.  
Ο' μίγας  
'Αγώνισ  
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ter the Lifts with Death and the Grave, and Sin, and all the Black Legions of Darkneſs, who had held us ſo long in fear and bondage. And though his whole Life was but one continued Diſpute with them, yet the ſharp and doubtful Encounter was at his Paſſion, when he was not only fore thruſt at, bruited, and wounded, but ſlain: Not only loſt Blood, but Life too; and his Body cloſely Impriſoned in a Tomb. So that now (one would think) Death might be able to anſwer the Queſtion of the Text to purpoſe; and ſay, Behold here's my Sting fixed in the Body of the Lord of Life; ſee the deep wound it hath made in his Side, which hath let out his very Hearts Blood. The Grave might alſo vauntingly reply, My Victory was in *Golgotha*, and behold here's my Priſoner, whom I have in ſafe Cuſtody in this Cave. But ſtay a while and you ſhall ſee the ſalvation of the Lord; who though he fell to the ground, roſe up again; and that *Anteus*-like, with renewed force and vertue; when he charged his Enemies afreſh, broke all their ſtrengths, and gave them a final overthrow; when he diſarmed Death of his Sting and quenched its Poiſon in his Blood; and by taking away the guilt thereof, deſtroyed both the power and enmity of Death; though he ſuffered the Enemy to continue till the General Reſurrection. He conquered the Grave alſo, making his way through all its Guards and Rampiers: it having no more power to detain him, than the travelling Woman hath the ſtruggling burden of her Womb, when it comes to the Birth. For how was it poſſible that a narrow Sepulchre ſhould hold

Exod. 14.  
13.



hold him, whom neither the Temple of *Solomon*, nor the *Heaven of Heavens* are able to contain. It was a glorious Miracle for him to open the Graves, to unlock those Chambers of Death for others, when he was alive; but infinitely more to break its Iron Bars asunder, and throw open its Doors, when he lay Dead, and buried in it himself; and to rise up, and march out, like the Sun in his full strength. A Victory this, sufficient to father it self, and which visibly points to no less than a Divine Author, and an Omnipotent Arm. It could be no other than our Spiritual *Sampson*; the strength of our Salvation, who when the Enemy thought him sure, and sealed up even to an Impossibility of a Resurrection, awoke thus out of the sleep of Death, shook himself, and carried away the gates of his Prison to the Heavenly Mount, giving eminent proof of his ability and fitness for this mighty Enterprize, by beating the Enemy at his own Weapon, and in his own Strongest Holds, the Grave and Hell; and all this in the weakness of Humane Nature, which had been so often foil'd by the Adversary.

And yet this Victory was not more Eminent for its Author, nor more wonderful for its Manner, than Compleat for its Effect. It was so absolute, that it not only presented us with our Capital Enemy in Chains, but extended it self to all its Associates, so as not to leave one Adversary behind, to lift up his hand against us. There's no more Condemnation now from the Law, to them who are under Grace;

Rom. 8. 1.

ch. 6. 14.

*Sin* hath no more Dominion over us, though it still keeps a Residence among us. Death hath never

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an Instrument of Cruelty or Terror left him, but being disarmed of his Sting, he is a naked, gentle, and innocent Enemy. He is destroyed also who had the power of Death, that is the Devil. And now the Serpents Head being thus broken, though his Tail may still move and seem to threaten, yet it cannot hurt us. We may safely play with the Scorpion, that hath lost its Sting; for though we may find some loathing and abhorrence in our selves to it, yet we shall receive no harm from it. To die now for Christians, is but to fall into a quiet and sound sleep; to renew our vigour for the Actions of an Everlasting and Divine Life, when we awake in the morning of the Resurrection.

The Grave likewise is so absolutely vanquished, that it will not withhold one of its Prisoners: but must at the appointed time surrender up all, both good and bad. Our Saviour hath so broken the Teeth and Jaws of this Devourer, that it may swallow, but it cannot grind us; it may receive us into its Belly, (as the Whale did the Prophet) but not being able to hold us, must of necessity cast us up again, upon the Land of Immortality. The Righteous shall come forth of that close Cell of Darkness and Corruption into spacious Regions of Light and Glory. The Wicked shall be brought forth too, but it will be to a Bar that will doom them to a far more Dismal Place: They shall rise out of one Pit, only to fall into another, more horrid and bottomless; They shall be roused out of a state of Insensibility and still Silence, to be driven into another of Sharpest Sense, and most shrill and terrible Shriekings; They shall  
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enter upon Miseries which are no more possible to be undergone by them, than understood by us.

judg. 10.  
15.

We may now be able to make some Competent Estimate of the greatness both of the Victory, and of the Mercy to us therein. A Victory over the Enemies of this Life, is valuable to those who have groaned under a Tyrannizing Conquerour; or smarted in some Bloody Battle. Those *Israelites* seem to have fully understood its price, who having been long harassed by their Enemies, offered to God whatsoever he pleased for one; *Do thou unto us, say they, whatsoever seemeth good unto thee, deliver us only, we pray thee, this day.* The Romans were not more satisfied with any Conquest, than with those they had over the *Germans*, because they were so near Neighbours, and had been so long and vexatious an Enemy to them. Surely a right apprehension of the Enemies in the Text will recommend this Victory over them, as far more glorious in it self, so more Comfortable to us. For of Enemies, some are Noble and Generous, aiming like *Pyrrhus*, only at Glory and Triumph; Others are Imperious and Tyrannical, designing (like *Carthage*) Domination and Oppression: yet the bitterest Feuds and Hostilities in this World, all Bodily Servitudes, and Temporal Sufferances whatsoever, are perfect friendships, freedoms, and Entertainments, in comparison of that Mortal (shall I say Immortal) Enmity, that Spiritual Bondage, that Eternal Misery, which we are delivered from by this happy Victory.

3. Which shews the Reasonableness of Triumphant and Rejoycing for the same. It was one of

of the Fundamental Laws of the *Roman Triumphs*, Val. Max. l. 2. c. 8. scilicet. 1. that there should be five thousand Enemies slain in the Battle ; but that could not debar our Victorious Lord from a right to this Honour, who had virtually slain infinitely more in destroying the whole Body of Sin and Death, and in spoiling Legions of Principalities and Powers. Wherefore as at his Resurrection he got the Victory, so at his Ascension he Rode in Triumph ; when he went up towards the Heavenly City *with a Shout, and the sound of a Trumpet*, having the Clouds for his Triumphal Chariots, *leading Captivity Captive, and making shew* Pf. 47. 5. Eph. 4. 8. Coll. 2. 15. of the Spoils openly. When he was doubtless met in the way to the upper *Jerusalem*, by numberless Troops of Angels and Seraphims, with Psalms in their Hands, and *Hosanna's* in their Mouths ( as the Daughters of *Israel* met his Father *David* with Musick and Dancing in his return from slaying the *Philistin* ) and by them Conducted with the greatest Magnificence and Jubilation into the Holy of Holies. 1 Sam. 1. 8, 6.

And as he hath given us the benefit of his Victory, so the honour of a Triumph too ; though at present in the Inferour Kind. We may have our Christian Acclamations now, proportionable to the Pagan Ovations ; and our *Hosanna's* to answer their *Jo Pæan's* ; and that upon better ground then any they ever had, seeing by it we are not only delivered from the power and malice of our Cruel Enemy, but also from those mighty fears and insuperable Apprehensions we had of them. He hath dispersed all those horrors and amazements, that unavoidably

sprung up in our Minds, under the thoughts of our dropping into an Abyſs of Darkneſs, and of nothing ; if not of endless and Exquiſite Miſery. He hath releaſed us from that perpetual anguiſh and perplexity, that formerly ſtuck to the Soul in ſpite of all Humane Relief. That ſcorn'd all the powers of Reaſon ; and mocked at the attempts of Philoſophy to remove it. He hath freed us from two greater Evils than Death it ſelf ; the precedent fear of it in this Life, and the diſmal Conſequence in the next ; ſo that we may now liſt up our heads and hearts with joy, and behold thoſe Inſulting *Egyptians*, our proud and inhumane Taskmaſters, lying dead on the Shore ; or their Carcaſſes floating on the Waves. We may take a new Song in our Mouths, or elſe that old one of *Mofes* with a little variation ; *The Lord hath Triumphed Gloriously, the Pale Horſe and the Rider hath be thrown into the Sea*, even into the Red Sea of his Blood. Or elſe reſume this Apoſtolic Hymn of the Text in a holy defiance of thoſe Enemies ; upbraiding and boldly challenging them now to do their worſt, and chearfully ſinging, *O Death ! Where is thy Sting ?* Come bring forth all thy Inſtruments of Miſchief, let looſe all thy Plagues and Poisons, exert thy deſtructive Victorious Power to the utmoſt, and hurt me now if thou canſt ; but alaſs thy Weapon is wreſted out of thy Hand, thy Sinews are Cut, and thy Meager Paleneſs is now not more the ſymptom of thy Envy and Malice, than of thy fainting and languiſhing Spirits. O thou great Deſtroyer of Mankind ! thou art now utterly deſtroyed thy ſelf. *O Grave ! Where*

*Exod. 15.  
l. 21.*



*is thy Victory?* Keep me in durance now if thou art able; make fast all thy Prison-doors, and throw thy strongest Chains and Fetters upon me, yet these (as in the case of *St. Peter*) shall all fall off, and the other fly open. O thou Devourer of all Flesh, thou art now swallowed up in Victory thy self, by him whom thou hadst devour'd. Who can forbear now not only to Sing, but Dance for Joy, who could not forbear before to Cry out and Tremble for fear, under the sight or sense of these hideous Bugbears to the Heirs of Mortality? seeing they are now so weaken'd and wounded, that there's little left for us, save the honour and pleasure to stand upon, and insult these Sons of *Anak*, who lie thus prostrate before us.

Let us then bravely despise and deride Death with all his Associates and Seconds. Let us not so far disparage this great performance of our Lord, as to receive the Spirit of Bondage again, to fear any of them. This would be to blemish the glory of his Victory, as if he had left it imperfect; whereas he was not only an absolute Conqueror of them all himself, *But hath made us also more than Conquerors*, through faith in him; and even that faith he gives us also, whereby we *overcome the World*. He hath not only ransom'd us from the Insolencies and Severities of our Enemies; loos'd our Bands, knock'd off our Shackles, and scatter'd our fears; but bids us fly in upon the Rich Spoils, seize the glorious Prize; and advances us to the greatest Privileges and Perferments. He not only settles us in a State of Peace and Security, but of Grace and Glory. He

Rom. 8.

37.

Judg. 14.  
14.

hath not only pluck'd the Sting out of Death, but hath left Honey in its stead; so that we may suck sweetness out of that Strong One, and find Meat and Manna in that Eater. That which was threatened as the greatest Punishment under the Law, is by our Saviours Victorious Resurrection become a real Blessing; and under the Gospel 'tis little less than a Promise and Priviledge, that *we shall all be changed*. It was formerly esteemed an unhappiness that we should dye: it would now be one if we should not. We should be forc'd to sojourn in this *Mesech*, and be confin'd to dwell for ever in these Tents of *Kedar*, were it not for Death, which is the happy gate to Everlasting Life. Wherefore we have no reason to look upon it as Satan's Serjeant, or as our Executioner; but as Christs Messenger, and our Usher to Glory. *Socrates* his Divinity rais'd him to such a heighth, as to tell his Philosophical Friend, that his Enemies might kill, but could not hurt him; sure our Christianity then will enable us to look upon Death, not so much as a tolerable Evil, but as the most desirable good, and the greatest of Mercies: fitter for our Love and Courtship, than for our Fear and Abhorrence. So that if an Angel from Heaven should bring us the news that we should never die, we ought to account it as no Gospel, no good Tidings, but rather as an *Anathema* to us. We need not shrug at the Grave neither; for that cold and hard Lodging by our Saviours lying there is become as warm and soft as a Bed of Down. That place of Stench and Noisomness, since this Rose of *Sharon* was planted there, is more fragrant than a Bed of Spices.

Spices. 'Tis now not a Dungeon, but a Repository, wherein the Sacred Dust ( the only Reliques ) of the Saints are to be inshrined, till the last Trump shall call for them again, to be built up into a new and living Temple for their own blessed Souls and the holy Spirit of God to cohabite in for evermore.

And as we have little cause to fear, so less to love these Enemies, or to enter into any secret friendships and Alliances with them any more ; *to make a Covenant with Death, and to be at an Agreement with Hell [or the Grave]* in the Prophets sense, *i. e.* to persist in the way of Wickedness, and cherish those Sins in our bosom, which are both His and Our Mortal Enemies ; which cost him so dear, as his own Blood to subdue ; and which if they be suffered to revive, will be the death of our Souls. Let us have a care that while he hath fought our Battles, we do not thus make war upon him. That would make this Victory over our Enemies, the greatest overthrow of our selves ; and call for a Lamentation instead of a Triumph. For such a perverse Requital of so great Salvation, must proportionably inhanche our future Everlasting Punishment.

What then shall we render unto the Lord for all these mighty Benefits ? Let us light all our brightest Torches of Joy and Gladness, and kindle all our Sacrifices of Praise and Thanksgiving, to this Eternal and glorious Conqueror, who hath wrought such wonders of Mercies for us, and destroyed those our Potent and Cruel Enemies ; Let us praise him not only with our Voices, but with our Affections ; in our Hearts and in our Lives ; in Pious Remembrances,

brances, and pure Conversations. The grateful Heathens used to Consecrate the Memory of those Heroes who subdu'd their Enemies, and freed their Countries from infesting Monsters and Giants: not only making them their Kings while they were on Earth, but their Gods afterward in Heaven. And can we do less to our Victorious General, who hath vanquished so many *Abaddons* and Monsters for us; who hath destroy'd a greater Devourer of Mans Flesh than the *Minotaur*, even Death it self, in its own Labyrinth the Grave; and hath quell'd a more terrible Serpent, than the many-headed *Hydra*, even that whole name is *Legion*. Certainly then to obey him as our King, and to adore him as our God, is both Rational and Christian. Why should we not Erect a Statue to his Honour (as Victors use to have) not of Silver or Gold, or the Work of Mens Hands, but the Divine Image of himself in our Hearts, for a perpetual Remembrance? Let us *take the Cup of Salvation*, and sing Everlasting Praises to this Immortal Lord of Life, who was content once to die, that we Mortals might live for ever: and when by his own Nature, it was impossible for him to do, assumed ours, to qualifie himself for Death for our sakes. To this Victorious King of Glory, who rose again to give us the fuller assurance of the truth of his present, and of our future Victory at the Resurrection; lastly, to this Triumphant God, who ascended visibly and gloriously into Heaven, to shew us the way thither, and to take possession of it for us; who hath in his Gospel thrown wide open the Everlasting Gates of Glory, and exposed to our view,

view all the Riches, the Beauties, and Honours of his Kingdom; that we might behold the glorious Furniture of those Eternal Mansions, he hath prepared for us; and the never fading Crowns of Immortality, hung out to edge our Appetites, and inflame our Ardors to be partakers of them, and to support and animate us in all Difficulties and Conflicts in our passage to this new *Jerusalem*: To him I say, let us give (as is most due) all possible Praise and Adoration, both now and for evermore.

And it could be no less than a firm assurance of this blessed Victory over Death, and a clear prospect of this glorious Scene of Immortality beyond it, which fixed this great and good Man (whose Obsequies we are now Celebrating) in so steady and uniform a Course of Christianity in his Life, and Composed him into such a Chearfulness and Serenity of Spirit at his Death.

In shadowing out a more particular, though but faint Idea of this Excellent Person, I need not borrow any Colour from his Blood; nor reflect any Lustre upon his Character, from the shining Vertues and Noble Acts of his Ancestors; which have Adorned his Family with many Royal Badges of their Loyalty and Eminent Services to the Crown: though the Honourary Augmentation of a *Hand and Banner* to their Arms, and of the Mannor of *Hanley* with its Franchises and Priviledges to their Estate, will never suffer the brave Atchievements of Advancing the *Black Princes* Standard at the famous Battle of *Cressy*, and the taking Prisoner Count *Tanquerville* the *Norman*, (that bitter Enemy to the

*Englisch*



*Engliſh* Monarch and Nation) to be forgotten ; not to mention, that the moſt Noble Order of *Bannerets*, wherewith ſeveral of his Progenitors have been honoured, ſufficiently proclaim their Martial Vertues and Performances.

But it being not from an Imputed, but Inherent Worth, that I deſign to tranſmit his Memory to Poſterity ; I ſhall rather obſerve, that the greateſt Excellencies of his Anceſtors ſeem'd to Concenter in his Perſon. The ſingular Piety of his Grandfather Sir *Peter* ; the extraordinary Charity and Benignity of his Uncle *Francis* ; the Conſtancy and Fixedneſs in Religion of his Father ; the quickneſs and Gaiety of Spirit of his Mother, with the untainted Loyalty of his whole Line ; conſpired with united Rays to render him the more Illuſtrious.

Theſe hopeful Seeds of Vertue and Excellency being caſt into his Original Elements, were ſo well water'd and cheriſh'd by his Careful and Pious Parents in the firſt Education of his Green Age ; ſo Cultivated and Improved by the Liberal Sciences at the Univerſity in his Blooming Youth ; and ſo Refined and Finished afterward at City and Court ; as render'd him a moſt Accompliſh'd and Uſeful Gentleman both to his Prince and Country.

The Natural Talents of his Mind were above the Common Standard. He was Endued with a large Capacity and generous Amplitude of Soul. His Underſtanding was able to penetrate and Maſter whatever he thought fit to turn it to. His Memory ſo faithful as to retain every thing it laid hold on, but Injuries and Vanities. His Judgment ſolid and clear.

clear. His Apprehension quick and sagacious; and his Will always well disposed, and in a posture to act, as well as embrace every thing that was good, and praise worthy. He had an absolute Command over all his Passions, save only those Divine ones, (which 'tis the greatest freedom and honour to obey) for though there were many things that might displease, yet none could disturb him. He had no Anger ever sparkling in his Eyes; no Malice rankling in his Breast; no Envy gnawing upon his Bowels. He knew no hatred of any thing but Sin; no fear of any thing but God. His whole frame was so mixt and interwoven, of so smooth and even a Web, that what Philosophy denies to the finest of Bodies, was the peculiar Prerogative of his inward Composition, *Temperamentum ad Pondus*.

In the happy Acquaintance and Converse I had with him for almost twenty years, I never perceived in him the least Inclinations to any Immoral, Indecent, or Dishonourable Action. He was free from all guile and disguise both in his Dealings and Discourses; not using to wrap himself up in Clouds, the more undiscernedly to carry on any mean or dark Designs. But esteem'd it below him to dissemble or disown what he judged fit to be either thought or done. He was not so Complaisant indeed as to indulge in himself, or brook in others, the Modish Humour of a Prophane, Unclean, or Abusive Wit; much less the too fashionable Dialect of Oaths and Maledictions; so that none came nearer to St. James's Character of a Perfect Man, the *not offending* so much as *in word*. No Pride strain'd his Behaviour; *7a<sup>m</sup>. 3. a.*

no Superciliousness distorted his Looks ; no Cynical Humour sowed his Expressions. But I must not stand on these inferior Commendations ; for though a Negative Description be the highest we can give of God, yet it is the lowest that can be given of a good Man.

His Social Qualities and Ornaments were too excellent in their kind to be omitted. He had all the Natural Charms and Graces of a most winning Address, and a sweet Conversation ; which few that came within their happy Influence could defend themselves from being taken with. None was ever endued with more Candor and Ingenuity ; more Frankness and Affability. He affected a Singularity in nothing, but in a sincerity, and pitch of virtue above the Age. In every thing, and under every Condition, he was so easie, free, and well pleased, as made every one so too about him ; which was not the fruit of any Labour'd Art of Popularity, but the result of his happy Genius : Cheerfulness and Delight being as inseperable from his Company, and streaming as easily and as naturally from him, as Light from the Sun. His Temper and Deportment were so calm and gracious, so sweet and obliging ; that he attracted the Esteem and Love ; and entertained the Eyes and Hearts of all People. So that in him, if ever that saying was really verified, *That none ever departed sad out of his Company, except that they so soon departed.*

He Acquitted himself no less Incomparably in all his Private Relations : He was the best of Husbands to a most Accomplish'd, Vertuous, and Excellent Lady,

Lady, which he chose out of the Honourable and Renowned Family of the *Chicheley's*; and by whom he was answered with an Equal Agreeableness, Fidelity, and Conjugal Affection. He was the Tenderest of Fathers to a hopeful and numerous Issue; of which the surviving six Sons and five Daughters, do according to their Age shew Pregnant Symptoms of their Excellent Dispositions, and the fair Fruits of his Paternal Care; in their Gentile and Liberal Education; in all things becoming their Sex and Quality; and especially in their seasoning with the true Principles of Honour, Vertue, and Religion.) How cautious and tender he was in Marrying any of them without their full Consent, their hearty Affection and free Choice, he put out of doubt to others, by raising one in himself, and offering it as a Case of Conscience; Whether it was Lawful for a Man to bend or incline the Affections of his Children, if Advantageous and Honourable Matches were proposed; and finding the Negative maintain'd, he resolved to abide by it. And according to these no less Prudent, than Indulgent Measures, a little before his Death he disposed both his Eldest Son and Daughter into very suitable and happy Marriages.

To his Tenants he was a good Landlord, if that Epithet could be purchased; either by his so moderate and kind usage of them, when he came to his Estate, as raised an envy in some of his Neighbours; or his frequent demanding no greater Fine for three Lives upon an Expired Lease, than what he offered to give them, for their surrendring up his Lands into his hand again.

His Friendships not being founded on Fancy or Interest, but on solid Reason and Vertue, were durable and generous. He was faithful to his Trusts; of which he had many. True to his Professions and Promises; which he held as sacred and inviolable. Constant to his Friend in the greatest extremity of an Adverse Fortune; and a ready Minister to him in all Offices of Love and Service; a Counsellor in his Doubts; a Comforter in his Distress; a Pillar in his Weakness; and a Pilot in his Danger.

That he was Master of a fair Estate, was only his good Fortune, and the praise of his Ancestors; but it was his Commendation, that he was a prudent Manager, and a Considerable Improver of it; particularly in the Addition he made to it of that Noble Seignory, the *Parliamentary Burrough and Barony of Newton*, in this Neighbourhood. His Mansion House he so far Rebuilt and Ennobled (partly in Effect and partly in Design, and preparations for its finishing) as may well nigh support what was said of *Augustus* in relation to *Rome*: *Invenit Læteritiam, reliquit Marmoream*. In the projecting whereof, and of another for Gods Service, as himself was the chief Designer, so in Architecture in general he was a great Master. Yet the Inward Model of his House, its Government, was no less Excellent and Regular, than its Outward Structure. For his Menial Servants, he always made choice of such Persons, as were Intelligent, Civil and Gentile; such as besides the discharge of their proper Offices, might by their general Course of Sobriety and Industry, by their good Manners and Ingenious Arts; and



and not by any Vice or Vanity; become Exemplary in the Family: and to whom he was a most gentle, kind, and bountiful Master, according to their deserts. His Entertainments upon Occasion, were very Splendid and Magnificent; and managed with that great Decorum, Ease, and Stilness, as if they had been but their Ordinary Meals. How welcom all Persons were to his Table, hath as many Witnesses as it had Guests: where there was always the greatest plenty that could be on this side excess; and which he seasoned with that generous Freedom and Chearfulness of Humour, that gave a pleasant Relish to all the rest. In short, There was such an Affluence of all things, so great a resort of Persons of Quality, and such a peculiar Port and Gentile Air appeared through the whole Family, that his House might very well be stiled a Country-Court, and *Lime* the Palace to the County-Palatine of *Chester*.

And because some may conceive these however laudable Qualities I have touch'd upon, to be but of the lower form, I must add, that ( besides that a Prudent Conduct, even in the smallest Affairs, is a true signature of a great Mind ) it is not for want of other Subject in him, nor any abatement to his greater Vertues, which eminently shone out in those higher Capacities and Stations, whereto he was deservedly call'd by his King and Country: being furnished with all proper Endowments for the weighty Debates in the Senate; and for the discharge of his Publick Offices both Civil and Military at home. For though there was no Man less fond of Business,

yet

yet none more fit for it; or who performed his Trusts with more Courage and Integrity: of which he gave sufficient Testimony in a steady and impartial Administration of Justice; in a strict preservation of the Peace; in a Provident Care for the Poor; in a constant protection of Probity and Innocence; and in a resolute opposition to all the bold Vices and Debaucheries of the times; as particularly, in the suppression of Schism in the Conventicles, of Faction in the Towns, and Mutinies in the Field; and that in the most Critical Junctures both of Church and State. In his whole Conduct pursuing the publick good, pointing at thole great ends of Government assigned by *St. Peter*; the *Punishment of Evil Doers, and the praise of them that do well.*

*1 Pet. 2.  
14.*

His Love to his Country was not more sincere and conspicuous than his Loyalty to his Prince; which waited not (as many others did) till the rising of the Sun, our late restor'd Sovereign; but it broke out in the most dismal midnight of a prosperous Usurpation; when Loyalty was punished as High Treason, and Faction rewarded as Meritorious; when the name of a King was held as Antichristian in the State, as that of a Bishop in the Church; and nothing was Crown'd in the Land, so much as in a Metaphor, save only Rebellion with success; nor any thing accounted more worthy of Consecration, than Schism and Sacrilege. Even then he engaged in the *Cheeshire* Rising to restore his Exiled Sovereign; though being surprized by the Enemy, he was prevented from appearing in that unsuccessful Enterprize, of which both these  
Palatine

Palatine Counties, ( the Stage of the Action ) and *York* Castle (the place of his Imprisonment) are unquestionable Witnesses; when in all likelihood he had fallen as a Martyr for his Fidelity to King *Charles* the Second, as his great Ancestor Sir *Piers Leigh* had done before, for his Loyalty to that unfortunate Prince *Richard* the Second of that name; had not Providence interposing by a sudden and happy Restoration of the King, left him only in the lower Class of Loyal Confessors: rescuing him for those subsequent faithful Services he afterward paid that Prince of Blessed Memory. For though he was actually in every Parliament during his whole Reign, yet he never joyn'd any Faction in the House, nor so much as once Voted against the Crown; which ow'd not its rise to any Court-flattery or Ambitious Designs, but to that well grounded Maxim, That the Ease and Weal of all the Members, depend not more necessarily upon the good Estate of the Head, than the happiness of the People doth upon their Sovereigns Welfare. This Loyalty of his was not mercenary and sordid, but so truly generous and Christian as to keep above the reach of Passion, Popularity, and Interest; neither was it of the Phantick and Unstable Kind, which displays it self no longer than the Prerogative shines upon it, or it may serve a turn; but it was a constant, uniform Church of *England* Loyalty, which is always ready and zealous to sacrifice every thing to the Sovereigns Service, (let his Religion and Temper be what it will) (be it Estate or Blood) save only the Cause of God  
and

and the Church; which as they are always *inseparable*, so may they be for ever *insuperable*. He was Proof against all Discontents, because incapable of any Disappointments. For though his Attendance upon the King and Countreys Service cost him many Thousand pounds, yet he never design'd any private Advantage from either; but proceeding upon the Heroick Principles of Honour, Duty, and Love to both, thought himself amply recompenced with the satisfaction that sprung up in his mind from the sense of such worthy and generous Actions. And this is the Triumph of our Loyalty to our King, as well as of our Love to God, to exert them both without so much as any prospect of Reward. Hence it was that he had the honour to be so particularly Esteemed, and Personally beloved by the two Royal Brothers under whom he lived, as to be intrusted by them in the greatest Offices which his choice of a Country Life would admit of; in all which he acquitted himself with such signal Fidelity, that (besides the many honourable and kind Attestations of King *Charles* to that purpose) his present Majesty at a solemn Debate about a reform of the Deputy Lieutenants, when the name of *Leigh* of *Lime* was mentioned, immediately declared, that he himself would undertake for that Gentleman. And when in his Royal Progress at *Chester* he heard of His last fatal Indisposition, he gave an evident Testimony of his great value and kindness for him, in a free Commendation of his Person, and a Pathetical Condolance for his Sickness.

As to his Religion, he was a true Son of that purest branch of Christs holy Church, the Church of *England*; from whom he suck'd those Pious and Loyal Principles, which led him on to all his Virtuous and great Actions. In whose Doctrines he was so fully Instructed, and so firmly Established, and in whose Offices so well satisfied and exercised, as to continue fixed in a constant and devout use of her Liturgy; in a frequent and comfortable participation of the Blessed Sacrament according to her usage; and in an unalterable adherence to her Communion in all its branches, in despite of all the Arguments and Motives both of Friends and Enemies to the contrary. For notwithstanding his near Relation to, his intimate Friendship and frequent Converse with many Considerable Persons of the *Romish* Faith in this County; and although in the other, where he lived, he could hardly breath out of a Schismatical Air; yet he kept himself untainted by either Extream, in all Trials and Temptations. So that the mouth of Envy and Malice it self must henceforth be for ever sealed up, from calling him either *Church Papist*, (as he hath been by the one) or *Church Puritan* (as by the other.) And as no Personal Considerations or Interests were able to draw him from the Church; so all the Storms and Tempests which discharged their fury against her, had no other effect, than to make him stick the closer to her, both for her security and his own; judging it highly reasonable, to be wanting in nothing to save that Church, wherein he assuredly hoped to be saved himself. And as the most effe-



etual means for that happy end, he daily pray'd for the peace of this *Jerusalem*, as he had formerly wept when he saw her in the dust. These two, *Prayers* and *Tears*, being all the Weapons she allows to be imploy'd in her Defence. And knowing that They shall prosper That love her and devoutly tread her Courts, he was a diligent frequenter of that place where Gods Honour dwells; and did not content himself to sit there as an idle and unconcerned Spectator (as the manner of too many is) but performed his part with so much Devotion and Exactness, that the Ministers themselves, if they equal'd, did not exceed him. And yet beside his constant Attendance upon the Publick Church Solemnities, he never fail'd of his Daily Service in his Domestick Chapel, nor of his yet more retir'd and secret Devotion in his Closet; wherein how hearty and sincere he was, those excellent Prayers and Meditations of his own composing for that purpose do sufficiently testify. But considering withall, that the Church was not the only place to exercise Religion in, but that the whole World was the proper and great Theater whereon its principal parts were to be acted; namely those indispensable Commands of Natural and Eternal Religion, a faithful Service of God and our Generation, in a Prudent, Pious and Moral Conversation: he took up neither with good Words nor good Intentions, being as little satisfied with a Talkative Divinity, as a Notional Faith; but went on to good Works; applying himself to all Real Acts of Beneficence in every kind. To the Indigent he shewed himself both Compassionate

nate and Bountiful ; no less Chearful than Charitable in ministering to their Necessities : scarce seeing a poor Person at a distance, but he prepared to meet him with his Alms in his hand, to prevent his being askt for what he esteemed a just Debt, and so doubled the value by the freeness of his gift. And whom he thus remembred in his life time he forgot not at his death, bequeathing Considerable Sums to their use, in the several Towns where he was blest with an Estate. To the Injured and Helpless Persons he willingly offered himself, as a Shield for their Defence from the violence and oppression of the unreasonable and powerful Man. Among the Contentious he was so blessed a Peacemaker, that he might well be styl'd the *Civil Conciliator* of his Country. He Compos'd many Differences and prevented more ; the former by Mediation, the latter by his Awful Authority, his healing Advices, and the peaceable Examples which he himself gave in this kind. For in matters of greatest moment, touching his own Estate, he was so complying and forbearing before he complain'd ; so earnest and solicitous for an accommodation when injured ; and so patient in waiting for a friendly issue afterward, that he has not escap'd Censure sometimes even from his Friends, for departing from his undoubted Right and Interest, rather than make any breach with his Neighbours, to the disturbance of his inward quiet and outward peace. He had a considerable Difference under his Arbitration, at the time of his Death, which though 'tis to be lamented he lived not to finish, that the Parties con-

cerned might have reap'd the peaceable fruits of his successful endeavours upon Earth ; yet 'tis not to be doubted but he hath met with the happy reward of his good purpose in Heaven. This Gospel-spirit of peaceableness and gentleness, of universal good will and Charity, was by long use so incorporated into his Constitution, and become so natural to him, that he was willing to become all things to all Men, to do good unto some. So that whosoever had occasion to make use of him, found in him according to his particular Exigence, the faithfulness of a Friend, the Wisdom of a Counsellor, the Uprightness of a Judge, and the protection of a Patron.

And if all this were not Evidence enough of his true Christian Piety in general, and of his unfeigned Love and Zeal for the Church of *England* in particular, we could *ex Abundanti* present you with a further Heroick proof of it, in this Parish ; where he has at his own proper Charges built a Decent and Elegant Chapel, and taken care to Establish a Competent Maintenance for a constant Ministry therein for the Publick Worship of God, *Secundum usum Anglicanum*. Wherein he shew'd himself no less the Son of the Divine, than of the Gentleman ; deriving from the former those Pious Affections and Inclinations to edifie the Church in a literal, as his Father had done in a spiritual sense ; and from the latter, the Abilities to perfect so worthy a Design. And as by the ordinary course of Generation, he made his descent from ; so by this extraordinary Act of Sacred Munificence, he made an ascent to the

the Dignity and Honour of his great Grandfather Sir *Peter Legh*, who was the sole Founder of the Parochial Chapel of *Disley* in the Parish of *Stock-Port*; in which for a better Augmentation of the Ministers Salary, this worthy Gentleman not only gave Twenty pounds a year in his life time, but appointed the continuance of the same after his Death, till his Son should come to Age. Which Magnificent Pieces of Piety afford a noble Example to all Men of Estates, of *honouring God with their substance*, according to *Solomons* Advice, as well Prov. 3.  
9. as with cheaper services; and will cast an Eternal Glory about his Name and Memory. This honour of building a House for the Almighty to dwell in, Holy *David* was more Ambitious of, than of being the Founder of the Royal Palace in *Sion* for himself and the succeeding Kings of *Israel*. Which though God denied him, yet he dismiss him not without both a Commendation and Reward, for his desiring and designing to do it. And that Mans praise is inroll'd in the Everlasting Register of the Gospel, who loved his Nation and built them a Synagogue. Luke 7. 5.

But notwithstanding the largeness of his Heart, and the liberality of his Hand, his constant Hospitality and Private Charities; his Publick Expences and Pious Works and Donations: yet at the foot of the Account, at his Death, his Personal Estate rose up to such an unexpected heighth, as can hardly be Accounted for upon any other Hypothesis than that Divine Principle, *That the Blessing of the Lord maketh rich*, Prov. 10. 22. And that *he replenisheth the Treasures of those that love him*, when emptied in Prov. 3.  
21. his

1 King.  
27. 14.

his Service. Accordingly this good Man seems to have shared in the promis'd Reward of Godliness in this life, and that in a higher degree than the Widow of *Sarepta*; for while her Hospitable Barrel and Cruse kept at a stand only and wasted not, his Wealth by his Religious Disbursements overflow'd, and like the true Riches of the Mind, improved by using; and so became an eminent Instance and Justification of that sacred Paradox, That *there is that scattereth, and yet increaseth*; Prov. 11. 24.

In short, This Excellent Person like an unspotted Pearl, was a Man of many and bright Vertues, without the least stain of any known Vice. In whom we found the Loyalty and Charity of a Church of *England* Man; the Piety and Purity of a Primitive Christian; the Publick Spiritedness and Magnanimity of an Heroe, with the Zeal and Constancy of a Martyr. All which Vertues were in him such Originals in their several kinds, as taken apart may challenge our Imitation; but in Conjunction demand our Wonder.

And now reflecting upon what I have done, in attempting to draw a Character, where 'twas fitter to pay Admiration; as it may appear to be my Crime, so also my Justification; the former for the Essay; the latter for the ill success of it. For though the Excellency of the Theme may Impeach my Confidence for undertaking it at all, yet it will at the same time Apologize for my Deficiency in performing it no better; the worth of this great Man being such, and so well known, that it doth not need, though it deserve, a better Orator. Besides,  
the



the great commotion which I feel in my own Breast for the particular share I bear in this general loss hath so scattered my thoughts, that it ought to be admitted not only to excuse a negligence of Style and a disorderly Method, but to justify them too; as most proper for an Argument too bulky for the Undertaker; and most becoming the tumultuaries of that Passion which hath possessed my Soul.

Having now attended this Extraordinary Man through the more remarkable and Illustrious Passages of his Life, we come to the last dark scene of it, that of his Death; which was uniform and of a piece with all the rest. For as he lived the Life, so he died the Death of the Righteous, in the Unity and Communion of the Church of *England*; thereby giving the most absolute Pattern of an Excellent Christian in both. This sad cloudy part he adorned with the most vigorous exercise of all those glorious Graces, Faith, Hope, and Charity, where-with he had so richly furnished himself in his life time; and of all those other Divine habits peculiar to that state: not only of Patience and Meekness, Christian Courage, and an Entire Resignment to the Divine Disposal, but of Earnest Longings and Breathings of Soul to be with Christ. In all things performing this last part so gracefully, as when he went off the Stage not only to deserve the Plaudits of all good Men and Angels to whom he was a Spectacle, but to receive an *Euge* and a Crown from his great Master, who hath doubtless exalted him to a State of full Récompence and Transcendent Glory with himself in Heaven; to his great and unconceivable

ceivable Comfort, though to our no less great and inexpressible Sorrow. His setting like that of the Sun (whose unlimited influence and bounty he emulated) though it creates a Day and Joy to the other World, leaves us in the Night and Darkness of gloomy thoughts for our loss. A loss which must be beholding to time to be understood, and to Eternity to be forgotten in; a loss that is not confined within the narrow limits of a Family or a Town; within the Precincts of a Hundred, or a County; but tis National and Epidemical; tis the loss of so great and good a Man, that the Gentry could not have lost a more faithful Friend, the Magistracy a more worthy Associate, nor the Country a more Nobler Patriot. Than whom the King could not have lost a more Loyal Subject, the Clergy a Stouter Champion, the Church a truer Son, nor the World a greater Example of all that is truly generous, vertuous, and praise worthy. Yet we ought not only with patience but chearfulness to Contemplate and acquiesce in this great Conjugation of our losses, they being also infinitely overbalanced by his gain of that *Eternal and exceeding weight of glory*, which we are all aspiring unto, and wherewith he is now certainly Crown'd amidst an innumerable company of Angels, and of the Spirits of Just Men made perfect in the City of the Living God, in whose presence is fulness of Joy, and at whose right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

What we have hitherto heard and seen, from both these Texts, (I mean the Word and Work of God) may

may yield some useful Inferences, that may reach those who are nearest concerned in this sad occasion. If it be true, that Death to the godly is now not only a Conquered Enemy, but a real and a Confederate Friend; not so much a Curse or a Cross, as a great Deliverance and Blessing; and if we ought to rejoyce and give thanks unto God for the Victory he hath gained and given us over it; then surely we ought to be far from murmuring or immoderate Mourning, when either we, or any of our fellow-Souldiers, are called out to Triumph over this Enemy, and take possession of those Conquests; as we do in part at Death: But on the contrary rejoyce and give thanks.

Hence we may infer a Double Duty. First the Abstaining from excessive sorrow: Secondly Admitting of moderate and suitable Joy.

First we should hence Learn to Abstain from Excessive sorrow. The voice of nature in the Heathens granted a Toleration for men to Lament their Deceased Friends, and to wait upon them with Tears and Sorrow to their Graves; But she bestowed her Praises and Encomiums upon those only who bore themselves bravely above it. Among the *Jews*<sup>a</sup> though mourning was not accounted a Sin, yet such a Defect and Defilement as Excluded them for a certain time from the use of holy things. And though Christianity it self hath not Entertain'd so much of Stoicism, as to cancel all natural affections, and to recommend a perfect Apathy to her Disciples; yet she undertakes to Limit and Direct their Motions; to as-

<sup>a</sup> *Exodus*  
*xxv*  
*xxv*  
*xxv*  
*Philos.*  
*Philos.*  
*Philos.*

sign them their proper Objects, and their due Measures. She knows that Love is such a Powerful Cement as works not only a close and firm Adherence, but such a strange Coalition, nay such a perfect unity of the Lovers hearts, that death cannot snatch away the one, without Tearing a piece from the other also; and so leave the survivor under a kind of necessity of smarting and bleeding for it. She therefore expects, not that men should be insensible of their loss, but only temperate in their sorrow. She desires they would not show themselves so much Friends to the Dead, as to become enemies to the Living, to God, and to themselves. Hence *S. Paul's* admonition to the *Thessalonians*, concerning *them which are asleep*, is not that they sorrow not at all, but that they *sorrow not as others who have no hope*. What a great disparagement and a Reproach would it be to our Religion, if we could not shew an equal courage at least with the Heathens under the loss of Friends, which many of them sustained not only with moderation but unconcernedness. Could we in truth urge that Argument for our Lamentation which *Rachel* alledg'd for her refusing comfort *upon the Death of her Children*, because *they are not*; or did we not really believe a Resurrection and eternal Life, we might have more pretence for an exorbitance in this kind: but now, seeing it appears from what has been said, and all Christians acknowledge that death can have no other force upon a man than was ascribed of Old to *Gyges* his Ring; not to unmake, but only to make him Invisible for a season:

1 Thes. 4.  
13.

son: why should we so grossly and meanly deny that in our practice, which we so openly and constantly avow in our Creed? and in despite of all the evidence of Scripture, and Specious profession of our Faith, by our unreasonable despondency tell the world that in truth we are destitute of all hope; that we not only question, but quite despair of the being, or the well being of the dead. For can we believe that they shall rise again, and yet thus bitterly bemoan them? what should we have done, if God had left them under the power of Death, without any Resurrection? nay what should we have done, if we had reason to believe that he had doomed them to the second, and Everlasting death? we hereby give too just occasion to the Enemies of our Religion, to deride and expose our Hypocrisy, and the Contradiction of our Lives to our Principles; and to wound it through our sides? nay in effect we doe it our selves; for every impatient exclamation, is a kind of Blasphemy against our holy Faith; and every deep sigh and groan a palpable Mockery and Ridiculing the Article of Eternal life. Upon which considerations<sup>a</sup> *St. Chrysostom* judges the indulgence of immoderate mourning at Funerals, so scandalous as to deserve Excommunication; and indeed whatever may be the pretence, there's nothing at the bottom but a deep tincture of Infidelity which gives birth and nourishment to this unruly passion. For who can believe that the Son of God himself died, and yet so impatiently lament that any of the Children of men should die also? who can believe

<sup>a</sup> Εἴτα ὁ  
 Ἰησοῦς ἰψὺς  
 ἴπτο, καὶ  
 Chryf: in  
 Heb. c. 2.  
 Hom. 4.



that he conquer'd Death and the Grave, rose again and ascended triumphantly into Heaven, and is there sat down at the right hand of the Father; and yet lye under such distractions of mind, when any of our Relations are call'd out of the body to follow him into his *Kingdom*. We doe hereby raise an evil report of that good Land, the Heavenly *Canaan*; we discover a mean esteem of that blessed seat, *Abrahams* bosom, whither good men are carryed at death by the Angels; nay we offer an affront to our Saviour himself in deploring their condition as miserable, whom Faith assures us to be with him in Paradise partaking of his Glories and made like unto him. And hence St. *Paul* who had been rapt up into the third Heavens, reckon'd it a Gain to him to dye and to be with Christ. And doubtless one assur'd thought of the Christians Heaven, one single glance of the Glories where-with our Friend is Crown'd, would effectually quash and becalm all those stormy passions, and impetuous commotions of Soul which we suffer for him. So that in final resolution, Immoderate mourning is so unchristian a passion, that it evidently betrays our want of those Gospel-Graces, either Faith in the Doctrine of the Resurrection, and future happiness; or hope and Charity; if we bewail our Friend as if he had no share in them. Whereas both his Life and Death were the greatest indications to the contrary; for as he liv'd not the common Life, so he dyed not the common Death of all men, but the peculiar and distinguishing one of Gods Children, amidst the Ministries,

nisteries, and in the embraces of those who would willingly have sacrificed their own lives to have redeemed his; amidst the prayers of his dearest Relations, returning them his last Counsels and Blessings; under the greatest calmness of Spirit, and clearness of understanding to the Fatal moment, his happy Soul being constantly exercis'd and inflam'd with the purest and most ardent devotion, overflowing with Spiritual Comforts and glorious Expectations, till at last it went off as it were in a holy Extasy on the wings of Divine Love and Heavenly Meditations, into the boundless Regions of Light, and Glory, and Immortality.

2<sup>ly</sup> and Lastly, let us not only shut up natures Flood-gates, and quit our selves like men; but let us open the Channels of grace, and rise up to the Dignity of Chriltians, and to the Example which the great Apostle gives us in the Text; by taking up a song of Joy and Thanksgiving to God, for the happy deliverance and exaltation of our Departed friend. There is nothing more usual, nor perhaps more natural for human Minds, than in their affections and inclinations especially to fly from one extreme to another. Mans whole life is but a Constant Vibration betwixt the opposite Passions of hope and fear; of Grief and Joy: which are the *Systole* and *Diaſtole* of the Mind, Alternatly and almost necessarily succeeding one another. And Tears are as natural Expressions of Extraordinary Joy, as of common Sorrow. Let us try then the Experiment in the present Case, and see how

happily we can Change the Irrational and dull Passion of sadness, into that Angelick and *Spritely* one of *cheerfulness and gladness of Heart*: By engaging our passionate and melting Souls in the Divine and Pathetick transports of Joy and Exultation with this Triumphant Saint: By Lanching as it were out of the Body, to fly up after him into those Orbs of Blessedness above, to be present at his Coronation, and to behold how he Reigns and Shines in the Kingdom of Glory. At least let us turn our Condoleances into Congratulations; Anoint our Heads and put on both Festival Robes and Spirits, at this time of his happy Inauguration. How unsuitable are our mourning weeds, to those white Raiments, with which he is now Array'd. How Incongruous are our sad cries and Ditties, to his Joyful Hymns and sweet Hallelujahs. Sure his blessed Condition which hath Advanced him above the Benefit, (though still below the Addresses and Adorations) of our Prayers is a fitter subject for Thanksgiving, than Lamentation. One of the best Arguments of true Love is the sympathizing, in both fortunes, with the party beloved. But what a Strange and Ridiculous proof do they offer of their Affection, who break their hearts with Sorrow, because their friend is Transported with Joy: who suffer their own spirits to be the more Dejected, by how much his is exalted? like the Representation of the heavenly bodies in the water, the higher the Objects are in Reality above its surface, the Lower doth their Image and Counterpart seem to sink beneath it.

Let

Let us rather Ascend with him in Divine Meditations, and rais'd Affections, into the highest heavens. Let us Rejoyce with him, who doth now Rejoyce, and Sing with him, who is now Singing a new song of glory and praise, and thanksgiving to Him that sits upon the Throne, for the infinite mercy of this his happy Translation. There's none who had any true affection for him here, but would be desirous to have as much Converse with him still as is possible. Now the only way, and the highest degree of keeping up a spiritual Correspondence, a holy Communion with him, is by doing Gods will on Earth, as he is doing it in heaven; by gloryfying our Creator at his footstool, as he is doing before his Throne; by bearing (though it be never so mean) a part in that Universal Confort and Anthem of Divine praise, which is Maintain'd by the Church OEcumenical; whereof he is singing the highest and sweetest Notes in the August Cathedral of heaven. There is Doubtless joy among the Angels at the Coronation of a Saint, as well as at the Conversion of a Sinner; and if there be no Expressions but of Sorrow amongst men on that Occasion, what is this but to walk directly opposite to the Inhabitants of that upper world; and to justify this Churches title of Militant on Earth, upon this (if there were no other) reason, that it Clashes with the ways and interests of that which is Triumphant in Heaven. Let us wipe off this black Infamy from the glorious name of Christians. Let Atheists and Libertines, whose hopes Expire with their breath,

go whining about in the Low and Lamentable style of Melancholick and Doleful Elegies at the Death of their friends; and of Despairing Declamations, and bitter Curses upon the Cruelty of the Fates. It becomes the Inlightned Race of Christs Disciples who profess themselves heirs of Eternity to make a higher and nobler Flight, and in a generous and heroic strain to sing a Triumphant Song at the Departure of those, who Die in the Lord; and to Congratulate their happy Advancement with a chearfulness of Spirit not inferior to that wherewith they now possess it. This *which I propose* is no Impossibility in Nature, nor *Romance* in Divinity; but a practical Mystery and a Noble eminence of Religion. The loving our Mortal Enemies, and the rejoycing at the Death of our dearest friends are perhaps two of the greatest heights in all Christianity; and the latter seems no harder a task, than the former. The one being but a Reconciling the Antipathies, the other the divorcing the sympathies of humane Minds. A pitch this, which was oftner Reach'd by the Strength of Nature and reason in the more considering Heathens than the former. The *Thracians* who mourned at the Nativity, used to rejoyce at the Funerals of their Friends. The *Egyptians* Celebrated the Obsequies of their Prophet *Isis*; The People of *Salamis* of their King *Evagoras*; and the old *Massilienses* of their Chiefest Friends; not with sorrowful Lamentations and Cries; but with Feasts and Entertainments; with Plays and Showes; with Musick and Dancing; with Songs and joyful Acclamations;



mations, as for those who were entering upon great Honours and Preferments. Whereas we run counter to the common stream of nature, as well as to the custom and reason of those Nations, if at the birth of our Friends, when they weep, we rejoyce; and at their Death when they rejoyce, we weep and lament. And though the Author of nature our blessed Saviour *wept for Lazarus*, yet if we allow the <sup>a</sup> Fathers Descant, it was not for his death, which freed him from the Miseries of this world; but for his rising from the Dead, which would again expose him to them. And Religion recommended to the first and best Christians this more suitable and chearful practice of Rejoycing at their friends Death; not only for the Pagans consideration, that they rest from their Labours, and all the troubles of this Life; but upon a higher reason also, that their works follow them, and that they are admitted into the Joy of their Lord. For the Ancient Church had their gladsome Torches, and joyful Hymns, and Psalms in their Offices of burial, which they sung at their Funerals in Testimony of their hope in the Resurrection; and in token that the Christian Combatants, having now Conquer'd, were Crown'd and advanc'd to glory; praising and thanking God for the same, taking Comfort to themselves, and giving Honour to the person departed: some Footsteps of which Primitive usage seem still Legible in the Customs of those places among us where Psalms are sung all the way while the Body is Carried to the Grave. Antiquity celebrated the anniversary memorials of their Saints also, not with the drooping and Me-

<sup>a</sup> *Doluit  
Lazarum  
non dor-  
mientem  
Christus,  
sed potius  
resurgen-  
tem. Hie-  
ron. Con-  
sol. ad Ty-  
ras. It.  
Concil. To-  
letan. 3.  
Can. 22.*

<sup>a</sup> *Τὶ βέ-  
λοται αἱ  
λαμπάδες  
αἱ φαι-  
δραι. --  
Τὶ δ' ἔστι  
ὕμνος. --  
ταῦτα  
παλαιά  
καὶ ἀρχαῖα  
ἴστω. Chry-  
sost. Hom. 4  
in Heb.  
83. u.  
Nazianz.  
in laud.  
Cesarii.  
Hieronym.  
ad O. tan.  
Epitaph.  
Fabiola.  
It. ad Eu-  
stach. E-  
pitaph.  
Paula.*

lancholick ceremonies of tears and cries, nor in the Mourning habit of Sackcloth and Ashes; but with the most splendid Scenes of Mirth and Festivity; with the sweetest expressions of Joy and Thanksgiving. And Doubtless if we had the same vigorous faith and hope which they had, we should not fail of shewing the same serenity of brow, and alacrity of spirit, upon the like occasions. This is neither an unpracticable, nor a very difficult province to him that hath learned to Live by Faith; to him that not only confesses with his mouth, but believeth with his heart this grand Principle in Religion, of every mans being after Death, and of the good mans being happy; nor lastly to him, who in our present Case shall be so just as to believe, that this good man, to whom we are paying these last Offices of Piety, is entred into the perfections and joys of Eternity. Whose Glory though it be shut up, and skreen'd from our eyes below, yet (as the Sun in an Eclipse) it opens and Displays it self Illustriously to them above. Mingling beams with those bright Stars of the Morning, the Angels and *Cherubims*, he is now securely placed in the City of God; actually Triumphant over Death and Sin; for he can now sin no more, and therefore can Die no more. His Soul may defy them both and say O Death! Sting me now if thou canst; O Sin! Poison me now, if thou art able. His Body also resting in hope, may say to the Grave; *Rejoyce not against me, O mine Enemy*: for though I am slain I shall rise again, Though I ly in *Darkness*, the Lord shall be a Light unto me.

*Mich. 7. 8.*

What our Saviour said of *Jairus's Daughter* is true

true of our Departed Friend, *that he is not Dead but Sleepeth*, or indeed but one part of him sleepeth, his Body; for his Soul is awake, and sings in Heaven. Nay he Lives on Earth too; for in many respects Death had no Dominion over him. His Fame still Lives, and will for ever, in the Mouths of all good men, that knew him. His Blood is still warm and flows in the veins of his promising Issue. His virtues and the noble Idea of his *great* mind still Lives, and fairly Dawns forth, in the hopeful Heir of his Family; which God grant he may as fully inherit, as he doth his outward Fortune; Or rather may a double portion of the Fathers spirit rest upon the Son; that he who Succeeds, may (if possible) Exceed him also, in all things that are great, and honourable, virtuous, and praise-worthy: That he may grow up to be a support to all the tender Branches, and a Joy to the Disconsolate Members of that Large family; And that in time he may fill up the great vacancies made by his Fathers Death, in all stations, whether private or publick, both with satisfaction to others, and honour to himself; and so become an Ornament both to his Name and Country.

To conclude with St. *Paul* in his words following the Text; *Let us give thanks to God for giving us and all Christians the victory over Death, and the Grave, and Sin, Through our Lord Jesus Christ.* Let us give thanks to God for this particular victory, which we assuredly hope he hath given our Departed brother over all his Enemies. Let his Dear Comfort give thanks to God and Rejoyce, not that the beloved guest of her bosom is snatched from her;

but that He is now in the Embraces of his Blessed Saviour, and Ravished with Extracies of Divine Love. Let his Dutiful Children give thanks and Rejoyce; not that He who gave them a being in this world, is taken out of it himself; but that they had a Father, who in his Life gave them an Example of great virtue; and left behind him at his Death, a Name more fragrant than pretious Ointment. Let us all rejoyce and give hearty thanks to God, for the great Ministeries and Comforts which he vouchsafed us in him, during his abode with us, and for the Merciful and seasonable Deliverance of him out of the Dangers, Temptations, and Mileries of this sinful world; Beseeching him in the Churches excellent prayer, *That of his Gracious goodness, he would shortly accomplish the Number of his Elect, and hasten his Kingdom: That we meeting again with this happy Soul, and All those other that are Departed in the true Faith of his holy name, may have our Consummation and blifs, both in Body and Soul, In his Eternal and Everlasting Glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

F I N I S.